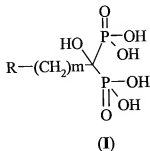


LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A process for the preparation of diphosphonic acids of the general formula (I)



wherein

m is an integer from 1 to 8 and

R is a residue of formula

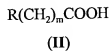


wherein R₁ and R₂ are independently selected from hydrogen or

C₁-C₅ alkyl, or

R is a 5- or 6 membered aromatic ring, optionally containing one or more heteroatoms selected from N, O, S,

by reaction of a carboxylic acid of the general formula (II)



wherein R and m are as defined above,

with a mixture of phosphorous acid and phosphorus oxychloride, in the absence of solvents and with a carboxylic acid: phosphorus oxychloride: phosphorous acid molar ratio of 1:2-4:8-12.

2. (Original) The process according to claim 1 wherein the carboxylic acid:phosphorus oxychloride: phosphorous acid molar ratio is 1:3:10.
3. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 for the preparation of diphosphonic acids wherein R is imidazolyl or pyridyl.
4. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 1 for the preparation of a diphosphonic acid selected from ibandronic, risedronic and zoledronic acid.
5. (Original) Ibandronic acid monosodium salt in the amorphous form.
6. (Previously Presented) A salt according to claim 1 with a water content lower than 2% by weight.
7. (Previously Presented) Pharmaceutical compositions containing the salt of claim 5 in admixture with at least one suitable excipient .
8. (Previously Presented) The process for the preparation of the salt of claim 5 comprising the salification of ibandronic acid with sodium hydroxide, carbonate or bicarbonate in an aqueous solution, followed by lyophilization or "spray-drying" of the resulting aqueous solution
9. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 2 for the preparation of diphosphonic acids wherein R is imidazolyl or pyridyl.
10. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 2 for the preparation of a diphosphonic acid selected from ibandronic, risedronic and zoledronic acid.
11. (Previously Presented) The process according to claim 3 for the preparation of a diphosphonic acid selected from ibandronic, risedronic and zoledronic acid.

12. (Previously Presented) Pharmaceutical compositions containing the salt of claim 6 in admixture with at least one suitable excipient.

13. (Previously Presented) The process for the preparation of the salt of claim 6 comprising the salification of ibandronic acid with sodium hydroxide, carbonate or bicarbonate in an aqueous solution, followed by lyophilization or "spray-drying" of the resulting aqueous solution.